

## VOICES, ELECTRONIC VISIONS AND ELECTRONIC STUDIOS

As a prelude to the “Model of the World”, International Exhibition in Zhangzhou, China and to the electronic media arts works exhibited from the Institute for Electronic Arts, I would like to provide a brief and partial view of the development of independent video arts and electronic arts in Upstate New York, USA starting in the early 1970s. The importance of the evolution of the Experimental Television Center in Binghamton and then Owego, NY and the Institute for Electronic Arts in Alfred, NY and their importance in North American Electronic Arts and Media Arts practice are the focus of the text that follows.

“I would like to see Upstate NY get recognized for all of our pioneering efforts in video”.  
Sherry Miller Hocking, 2016 email to Andrew Deutsch and Peer Bode.

In 1971 Ralph Hocking founded the Experimental Television Center at SUNY Binghamton University. Ralph Hocking has described the ETC as a project of education, art and technology. One of the goals was supporting artists’ altering technology.

1972 saw Harland Snodgrass at the School of Art and Design NYSCC at Alfred University experimenting and teaching with video. The Time Space Interface, TSI project was established.

In 1997 three faculty, Joseph Scheer, Jessie Shefrin and Peer Bode established the Institute for Electronic Arts, IEA, at the School of Art and Design, NYSCC at Alfred University.

THE EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER  
<http://www.experimentaltvcenter.org/frontpage>

Sara Watson , Curator, Hunter College Graduate Art Gallery: “A History: ETC...” 2015:

“For over forty years, the Experimental Television Center (ETC) was one of North America’s preeminent organizations for video art, fostering a community for creativity and innovation through its residency and conceptual tool-building programs. Founded in 1971 by Ralph Hocking, a professor in the Cinema Department at Binghamton University, the ETC developed out of Hocking’s media-access organization Student Experiments in Television (SET). As the interest in video as an artistic medium gained momentum, the ETC provided access to and training in this new technology to artists; interested citizens; and social, cultural, and educational organizations. Invested in pushing the boundaries of video as a medium, the ETC developed a program to create

more flexible video processing tools for artists. Under the direction of artist Nam June Paik and engineer Shuya Abe, a Paik/Abe Video Synthesizer was constructed for the Center's permanent use, which launched the ETC's artist residency program.

Over 1,500 artists participated in the ETC residency program, which was located in Binghamton, New York from 1971 to 1980 and in Owego, New York from 1980 to 2011. The residency functioned as a site for play, exploration, education, and practice for media artists. Although the Center closed its physical space in 2011, its philosophy and ethos endures through an ongoing commitment to education, research, and the preservation of video as a creative medium. According to this mission, the ETC's comprehensive archive is now housed in the Rose Goldsen Archive of New Media Art at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York and is currently being digitized, preserved, and made available for research.

Ralph Hocking:

In the 1986 essay from the Generic Real-time Interactive Digital Catalog, a show curated by Peter Chamberlain at the Arnot Art Museum, Elmira, NY: "The ETC Ltd. also has a research and development program concentration on the invention of low cost analog and digital tools and the development of software to support these tools. The main thrust of the ETC Ltd. is to encourage individual artists to develop a personal studio for their own purposes of video art making. This is based on my feeling that the art form will not develop fully unless daily contact is possible with equipment necessary to produce the art. As the cost of machines and components declines, we are coming closer to that goal."

Peer Bode:

"At the ETC, we crossed the contact and influence of an earlier generation who were mentors and inspirations in the making of the next electronic works. There was the impact of Nam June Paik, Shigeko Kubota, Ralph Hocking, Steina and Woody Vasulka, Walter Wright, Dan Sandin, Taka Imura, Peter Campus, Vito Acconci, Larry Gottheim, Ken Jacobs, Nicholas Ray, Jack Smith, Jonas Mekas, Peter Kubelka, Ernie Gehr, Paul Sharrits, Hollis Frampton, Tony Conrad, Michael Snow and Joyce Weiland and then the electronic music artists, a whole other list, you get the idea."

Timothy Conway Murray:

2015 Subject: bold electronic experimenters  
From ...empyre- soft-skinned space...Cornell University, Ithaca, NY  
<http://goldsen.library.cornell.edu/etc/>

"Hi, everyone, I am forwarding this posting from Peer Bode:  
The ETC allowed many of us next generation young artists to participate in the adventures of electronic video thinking and making. When I think of making work at the ETC, I come back to the notions of experimentation, process and performance. There were the array of evolving electronically modified and electronically designed and built tools handed over to each artist, commonly for five days, in a space and location that had

great ambience of comfort and particularly in Owego, great natural beauty, the Susquehanna river etc. The artists were given a fast workshop in equipment and system details by myself and in later years by Hank Rudolph. They were then left alone to explore and work. I was taken by Kristin Lucas's comment of how many tapes and recording she had made at her ETC residencies. Multiply that by the number of artists who worked in the ETC studios and you begin to see the sheer enormous scale of work, now history, that was made at the ETC. That is a cultural heritage, a huge virtual archive across many artists.

The French theorist and artist Thierry Kunztel came to the ETC in Owego, via South America in 1981. In conversation I asked him if there was something singularly important that he learned studying with Christian Metz and Roland Barthes. His response was quick. He said it was the importance of making actual media image and sound work. Given that Thierry himself was such an important and celebrated writer, his comments concerning the importance of making media work was a surprise. I agreed with him. I would add on today, make the media work and make the situations to see and hear and reflect on the media work. Look at the work. Listen to the work. Keep looking and listening to the work. Keep being in dialogue with the work.

The ETC experience, wow . Fortunately the ETC studio and programs closing have not put an end to it all. The Experimental Televisions immediate organization children, the Institute for Electronic Arts (IEA) Alfred and Signal Culture, Owego continues the experimental electronic arts imagination and outreach today. “

#### THE INSTITUTE FOR ELECTRONIC ARTS <http://iea.alfred.edu/>

Three artists and educators, Joseph Scheer, Jessie Shefrin and Peer Bode founded the Institute for Electronic Arts (IEA) in 1997. All teaching at the School of Art and Design, NYSCC at Alfred University, Alfred, NY, they saw the opportunity to develop a professional new media facility that would give artists the needed opportunity to experiment, learn and produce new art works using contemporary and emerging new media technologies. Already starting in the late 1980's they were exploring the use of computers in their art school classes. Their material engineer colleagues and unit heads at the New York State College of Ceramics, Jim McCauley and David Pye suggested they consider establishing an institute as many of the engineers had, to further explore and support their research, in this case new art research and education. The three artist educators traveled to print and electronic trade shows to speak with industry leaders in the fields of photography, printing and new media. In 1997 they formally established an artists' studio workshop at the School of Art and Design they named the Institute for Electronic Arts (IEA). The three IEA Co-directors, Joseph, Jessie and Peer expanded the organization to include other faculty such as Xiaowen Chen, Andrew Deutsch, Gerar Edizel and technical specialists Mark Klingensmith and Donald Weinhart as well as a

number of research assistants over the years including Pam Hawkins, Lara Odell, Joo Mee Paik, Steven Pederson, Devin Henry and now Jessica Earle who have run the facility and worked and instructed the visiting artists. Support for the IEA came from the School of Art and Design, donations from private industry and grants from foundations and government art funding agencies, including the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation as well as private sources. Since 1997 the IEA has hosted over 300 artists from New York State and artists nationally and internationally working in large format digital Iris prints, laser etched prints, digital based book projects, signal processed video and sound projects and digital interactive, new media multichannel installations. Artists who have come to Alfred to make new media art works include Kiki Smith, Ann Hamilton, Woody Vasulka, Pauline Oliveros, Tony Conrad, Barbara Hammer, Tom Rhea, Pam Joseph, Xu Bing, Xiang Jing, Chi Peng, Huang Yian, to name a few. The IEA and its partnering art school programs also supported conferences and lectures which brought international artists and scholars such as Valie Export, Steina Vasulka, Song Dong, Fei Dawei, Gao Minglu and Siegfried Zielinsky. In the late 90's the International ETC and IEA Summer Workshops took place at the ETC in Owego, NY. In 2001 the IEA carried out the first major 7 week workshop in Media Arts, in digital printing, video and sound at the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in Beijing. The workshops were led by Peer Bode, Xiaowen Chen, Darrin Martin and Joseph Scheer. In 2013 the IEA established the Electronic Arts Alliance Project, a collaboration with the Burchfield Penney Art Center in Buffalo, NY. to support the extended public exhibitions of electronic media art projects. In 2014 the IEA was invited to join the International Studio of Interactive Media, Jinlin College of Arts, Changchun, China to support international new media arts projects. Many works produced at the Institute for Electronic Arts , School of Art and Design, NYSCC at Alfred University have been exhibited nationally and internationally.

From the 2001 "Open Source", IEA/CAFA Beijing catalog : Peer Bode, "... Electronic entertainment, advertising, fashion, design and medicine, ... and then there is electronic education media. Electronic art is electronic education is inter net and television for and about people. My television video electronic educational inter net art is for people, minds and bodies. Electronic art educational inter net television. Not so hard to imagine. It's a pleasure".

In the Spring of 2017 the Harland Snodgrass, Time Space Interface, TSI Gallery was established at the School of Art and Design, NYSCC at Alfred University, Alfred, NY.

"MODEL OF THE WORLD", International Exhibition, Zhangzhou, China

Works from the Institute for Electronic Arts, SOAD, NYSCC at Alfred University in the Model of the World, International Exhibition Zhangzhou China exhibition include works by Peer Bode, Robert Brinker, Zenas Burns & Darrin Martin, Xiaowen Chen, Andrew Deutsch, Jessica Earle, Alicia Eggert, Ann Hamilton, Phil Hastings, Gary Hill, Pamela

Joseph, Yayoi Kusama, Aodi Liang, Luftwerk, Thane Lund, Stephanie McMahon, Ian McMahon, Rebekkah Palov, Joseph Scheer, Emil Schult, Kiki Smith, Eric Souther, Phillip Stearns, Steina and Woody Vasulka and Carrier Band.

To mention a few of the IEA artists: Steina and Woody Vasulka, early new materialism practitioners, are pioneers with their extensive experimentation and exploration of the sparkling video signal and video grammar in the form of performative moving image works and documents. Gary Hill is world renowned for his historical multi monitor video installation pieces as contemporary sites for exploring the interfaces of the body, language and technology. Emil Schult has created a body of work using new technologies to further human ethics as well as experiences and understandings. Xiaowen Chen has made a large body of work spanning numerous mediums. His present multi channel screen piece encourages the development of creative skills to change the condition of the piece, to give color to every word with which we make the message. Pamela Joseph and Rob Brinker have each used new technologies to explore the body and desire though multiple cultural lenses. Kiki Smith continues to inspire with sensitive image explorations that are remarkable for being able to be simultaneously personal, idiosyncratic as well as culturally expansive. The larger group of younger media artists in this exhibition are each making impressive works that are educating us by creating strong visions of contemporary charges, pushing what we understand and experience in our cultural and personal lives.

Electronic music, media arts, and the moving sound, image and object continuum are the manifestations of contemporary art thinking, of the crossing of culture and materialism. At this time, this later part of the 21st century's second decade, we might look to see how this thinking is further charged and opened with emerging notions of the new materialisms. The moving image and audio, as art forms, once yearning for legitimacy are now leading cultural and critical forces. We have confirmed the legitimacy of the moving image and audio with the establishment of future-looking academic new media arts programs, all paralleled by newly-arrived academic media theorists and historians. The electronic arts, in its varied manifestations, is poised to be the significant contemporary Lingua Franca, the contemporary form of global human expression.

Peer Bode  
Alfred, New York  
2017